



Working Paper No. 59

**POPULAR REACTIONS TO STATE
REPRESSION: OPERATION
MURAMBATSVINA IN ZIMBABWE**

by Michael Bratton and Eldred Masunungure

**A comparative series of national public
attitude surveys on democracy, markets
and civil society in Africa.**



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AFROBAROMETER WORKING PAPERS

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by Michael Bratton and Eldred Masunungure

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Popular Reactions to State Repression: Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe

Abstract

In May 2005, the Government of Zimbabwe launched Operation Murambatsvina (OM), a state-sponsored campaign to stifle independent economic and political activity in the country's urban areas. This article employs a national probability sample survey to analyze the popular reactions of ordinary Zimbabweans to this landmark event. It shows that the application of state repression succeeds at some goals, fails at others, and has powerful unintended effects. We report that the scope of OM was wide and that its main victims of OM were younger, unemployed families whom state security agents saw as potential recruits for social unrest. While OM undoubtedly disrupted the informal economy, we show that it did not succeed in banishing urban dwellers to rural areas or permanently shutting down informal trade. Moreover, the crackdown thoroughly discredited the police and other state institutions. We also demonstrate that state repression backfired by emboldening its victims, deepening polarization between political parties, and fortifying the ranks of Zimbabwe's opposition movement.

Popular Reactions to State Repression: Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe

Rulers resort to repression when they run out of options for governing. They employ the coercive instruments of state mainly when unable to win popular support using more legitimate methods. The application of state violence is an extreme and unpredictable policy choice that is almost always adopted under conditions of political or economic crisis. Rulers generally prefer to use persuasion or patronage to win the loyalty of followers but, if they lose elections or confront an empty treasury, then the urge to cling to power may tempt them to call out armed forces against their own citizens.

By mid 2005, there is little doubt that Zimbabwe faced twin economic and political crises.¹ The Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government of Robert Mugabe, in office without interruption for a quarter century, had exhausted its capacity for good governance. It was able to extend its tenure only through a series of increasingly disputed elections marred by intimidation, vote buying, and ballot fraud. For harassing its political opponents, the ZANU-PF government was driven into international isolation, mainly by the Western powers but also from selected members of the African Union. And, by embarking on an ill-considered and chaotically implemented program of land seizures, the Mugabe government had also turned the country from an agricultural exporter to a needy recipient of foreign food aid. By 2005, as a result of gross economic mismanagement, the government was essentially bankrupt and desperate to gain access to dwindling supplies of foreign exchange.

In May of that year, in the aftermath of parliamentary elections that confirmed that ZANU-PF had lost political control of Zimbabwe's urban areas, the government cracked down. Its security apparatus launched a massive "urban clean up" campaign called Operation Murambatsvina that was justified as a strategy to eradicate illegal dwellings and eliminate informal trade. As with earlier attacks on journalists and opposition parties, colonial-style legislation was invoked to regulate how people could house themselves or make a living. Analysts and observers inside and outside the country commented that the crackdown was conducted in an indiscriminate manner and with unjustified force. Because it breached national and international laws guiding evictions and undermined the livelihoods of large numbers of people, the operation was broadly condemned as a gross violation of human rights.

This paper measures the popular reactions of ordinary Zimbabweans to Operation Murambatsvina (OM) by means of a national probability sample survey. Administered in October 2005 as part of Afrobarometer Round 3 in Zimbabwe, the survey instrument contained a battery of questions about the impact of the OM campaign on the residential and economic circumstances of respondents. These data cast light on important questions: Who were the victims of OM? What hardships did they experience? How did they react to repression? By comparing the economic conditions and political affiliations of Zimbabwean citizens in late 2005 with the results of previous surveys, it is also possible to arrive at conclusions about whether the ZANU-PF government helped or hurt itself by cracking down.

As an instrument of governance, state repression is crude and costly. If the balance of power favors the government, then deployment of the police and army against citizens may achieve certain short-term objectives. For example, the crackdown in Zimbabwe may have temporarily met the primary policy goal of preempting political protest. It may even have had a wider scope of indirect effects – for example, in deepening the psychological trauma of Zimbabwean citizens – than initially intended. But it clearly failed to meet key official objectives. According to our survey data, Operation Murambatsvina did not lead to a massive relocation of populations from urban to rural areas or to the permanent demise of the informal economy. Most importantly, the use of repression prompted a backlash of unintended consequences. In Zimbabwe, a strategy of coercion ultimately undermined the legitimacy of key state institutions, notably the police force, and boosted overt political support for the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC),

the main opposition party. It may even have emboldened the populace, particularly the very victims of state repression.

Anatomy of a Crackdown

On May 17, 2005, contingents of Zimbabwe Republic Police swooped down on street vendors who were plying their trade on the streets, squares and corners of Harare's central business district. They confiscated or destroyed the goods on sale – including food, flowers, clothes, shoes, and curios – arrested the traders, and assaulted anyone who resisted. The campaign against informal trade soon spread to suburban flea markets in Harare's elite northern suburbs and into the sprawling, southern "high density areas," where the taxi operators who sustain the commuter transport system were prevented from purchasing scarce fuel on the black market. "Police will leave no stone unturned in their endeavour to flush out economic saboteurs," police spokesman Chief Superintendent Oliver Mandipaka told the state media.²

Within days, public anger at the raids boiled over. Faced with an economy that had shrunk by nearly half over five years, over 70 percent unemployment, and triple-digit inflation, many Zimbabweans had turned to the informal sector as a source of livelihood and survival. Government policies that misguidedly tried to control consumer prices had driven basic commodities from the shelves of the country's supermarkets and into the hands of private entrepreneurs who sold them more or less covertly at higher market prices. Indeed, many Zimbabweans benefited from informal trade, whether via proceeds from sales or by gaining access to otherwise unavailable goods. When the authorities sought to remove these economic opportunities, some people took to the streets in protest, for example barricading township roadways and engaging in running, stone-throwing battles. The government retaliated by putting security forces on high alert: convoys of armed soldiers were sent into the townships and police roadblocks were set up at entrances to the city.

At the same time, the scope of the onslaught widened, now targeting, without warning, the homeless and the poorly housed. On May 24, the City of Harare Commission announced that residents must demolish all illegal structures, including roadside kiosks, backyard workshops, rental rooms, and shack dwellings, no matter how sturdy. Across the extensive squatter settlements that surround Harare, police bulldozed unapproved structures and set fire to furniture and other household goods. Hapless family members – old and young, male and female alike – were loaded onto lorries and trucked to hastily established and unprepared transit camps where they were left in the open with minimal shelter – often no more than plastic sheeting – in the winter cold. And, beyond the capital city, the crackdown extended to urban areas countrywide; it was especially harsh in Bulawayo and Mutare; but it also reached other provincial centers like Gweru, Kadoma, Kwekwe, Chinhoyi, Marondera, and Victoria Falls. Those who were evicted were instructed to return to their "homes" in Zimbabwe's rural areas regardless of whether they were born and bred urbanites or second- or third-generation descendants of immigrants from Malawi and Mozambique.

The authorities explained the cleanup campaign, codenamed "Operation Murambatsvina," as an effort at urban renewal aimed at ending the filth and crime associated with the more unsavory parts of the informal economy. The official translation was "Operation Restore Order," though this appellation emphasized a rehabilitative goal and arose only after pockets of popular resistance emerged. A more accurate translation from the Chishona would be "one who refuses dirt" or, more colloquially, "Operation Drive Out Rubbish," which conveys the cavalier disregard with which the government treated its own citizens. As always, Zimbabweans invented their own nicknames, dubbing the scorched earth strategy "Operation Murambavanhu" meaning "Operation Anti-People." Or they called it a "tsunami," which was an apt description of the flattened landscape left behind in Mbare *musika* (the central market) in downtown Harare.

Why did the government resort to such severe internal repression? The most plausible interpretation is that Operation Murambatsvina was an effort by ZANU-PF to reassert economic and political control in the aftermath of the March 31, 2005 parliamentary elections.

Economically, the government had tried to stock the shops with consumer goods and keep prices down in the run-up to the election. In a brazen attempt to buy votes, the government announced a tenfold increase in the minimum wage for domestic workers on the day before voting. Traditional political leaders who were loyal to ZANU-PF were rewarded with increased salaries, four wheel drive vehicles, electrification of homesteads, and, for some, promises of promotion to the Senate. And the rank and file of the army and police were kept well fed even as the country slipped into its most serious food shortage since independence with an estimated one-third of the population in need of relief. The ruling party also often used food as a weapon among the electorate: it directed the distribution of relief supplies to its own supporters, denied it to known opponents, and threatened to withhold food in the future from anyone who voted for the opposition.

Yet the costs of a profligate election campaign financed by printing currency and through deficit spending could not be avoided indefinitely. In the aftermath of the election, the government was forced to increase the price of maize meal, the staple of the Zimbabwean diet, by 50 percent and the price of bread by 30 percent. Petrol was suddenly unavailable. Warned by the Central Intelligence Organization that price increases and commodity shortages could spark food riots, the Joint Operations Command seems to have recommended a preemptive strike to nip protest in the bud and disperse prospective demonstrators to the rural hinterland.³ At the same time, the government sought to regain control over the vital resource of foreign currency. Not content to extract such reserves from commercial farms, industrial firms and international hotel chains, the government sought also to seize the US dollars and South African rands that were freely circulating in the informal sector. While blaming black marketeers for hoarding goods, creating artificial shortages, and driving up prices,⁴ the authorities' real motivation seems to have been to recapture official control over the circulation of hard currencies.

Politically, the parliamentary election of March 2005 had failed to boost the government's legitimacy. In the closing days of the election campaign, the opposition MDC had routinely attracted larger and more enthusiastic crowds than had dutifully appeared at ZANU-PF rallies.⁵ Yet, when the results were announced, ZANU-PF had increased its share of parliamentary seats compared to the previous election.⁶ This sleight of hand was only possible because of a string of irregularities. In the run-up to the election, the electoral roll was allegedly inflated with ghost voters, rights of free association and expression were compromised by restrictive legislation, the state-controlled media systematically favored the incumbents, and impartial international election observers were denied entry into the country. On the day of the election itself, polling stations were disproportionately concentrated in rural areas and at least one out of ten voters was turned away from the polls for want of correct documentation. Most importantly, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) announced official results that, for many constituencies, bore little resemblance to the totals and distributions of votes recorded by observers and party agents on the spot.⁷ Even ZEC's own preliminary and final figures varied, sometimes widely and wildly, raising serious credibility problems.

Despite its success at manipulating the 2005 election, ZANU-PF could not conceal the fact that it had lost control of Zimbabwe's major urban centers. In a pattern reminiscent of the previous parliamentary election in 2000, the opposition MDC won all seven parliamentary seats in Bulawayo and all but one of Harare's eighteen seats. In this light, Operation Murambatsvina appeared as an act of retribution by a vituperative ruling party against a noncompliant electorate. An urban office worker complained that, "first Mugabe took the land, then our jobs, now our food. He wants to kill us. People say Mugabe is punishing us because we voted for the MDC."⁸ Elaborating on this sentiment, MDC spokesmen accused

the government of trying to provoke violent reactions from city residents in order to justify rule by decree under a State of Emergency.⁹

Whatever the motivation behind the crackdown, it had profound social impact. In a toughly worded report in July 2005, the United Nations described Operation Murambatsvina as a “disastrous venture” that provoked a “humanitarian crisis of immense proportions.”¹⁰ The UN’s special envoy, Anna Tibaijuka went on to say that:

“Hundreds of thousands of women, men and children were made homeless, without access to food, water and sanitation, or health care. Education for thousands of school age children has been disrupted. Many of the sick, including those with HIV and AIDS, no longer have access to care. The vast majority of those directly and indirectly affected are the poor and disadvantaged segments of the population. They are, today, deeper in poverty, deprivation and destitution, and have been rendered more vulnerable.”¹¹

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, added that “a catastrophic injustice” had been perpetrated with “indifference to human suffering”: “I call on the Government to stop these forced evictions and demolitions immediately, and to ensure that those who orchestrated this ill-advised policy are held fully accountable for their actions.”¹²

Yet, only days later, the resident UNDP representative in Harare noted that, despite government assurances to the contrary and in the face of international condemnation, a new round of demolitions and evictions was underway at Porta Farm, Harare’s main informal settlement.¹³ Indeed, the government continued sporadically to persecute squatters, street children and roadside vendors throughout the following year.¹⁴

The Survey

The Afrobarometer is a comparative series of public attitude surveys on democracy, markets and civil society, now conducted in 18 African countries.¹⁵ Following previous surveys in Zimbabwe in September 1999 and April 2004, a Round 3 study was conducted from 9 to 26 October, 2005, that is, after Operation Murambatsvina in May but before the Senate elections in November. Trained fieldworkers, who traveled together in small teams and were closely supervised on a daily basis, conducted 45-minute interviews in the language of the respondents’ choice (Chishona, Sindebele or English). The Mass Public Opinion Institute (MPOI), a Zimbabwean non-governmental research organization, conducted all fieldwork.

The intended sample of 1200 respondents was designed to represent the voting aged population, 18 years or older. The sample covered both urban and rural segments in all ten administrative provinces with probability proportional to population size. It was divided into two parts: a *representative main sample* of 1096 persons randomly selected via a multistage, clustered formula; and a *purposive sub-sample* of 104 persons known to have been displaced by Operation Murambatsvina and living in the open or in transit camps. The logic of the split sample was as follows: since OM involved the destruction of dwellings and rendered some people homeless, any such victims would not be captured in a random sample in which one of the stages was the household. In the presentation that follows, any generalizations about *adult Zimbabweans* are based on the main random sample only. Statements about *OM victims* are based on those in the main sample who reported being affected by the crackdown *plus* those persons in the purposive sub-sample, who we knew to be internally displaced.

In practice, the survey team was able to complete 1048 returns from the main sample and 64 returns from the sub-sample, totaling 1112 interviews overall. The achieved sample fell slightly short of the intended sample because fieldwork was disrupted by unruly political elements affiliated with the ruling party,

causing MPOI to abort the survey towards the very end. This unfortunate experience demonstrates that, as the political environment in Zimbabwe becomes ever more closed, occasions for impartial scientific research are rapidly diminishing.

The Scope of the Crackdown

How widespread were the effects of OM? The full scope of the crackdown was hard to judge because foreign journalists were banned from the country and local reporters were constrained by tight media controls. Moreover, a nationwide fuel shortage made it difficult for anyone to observe far-flung events in multiple locations at first hand. Within the first two weeks, estimates began to circulate that 30,000 traders had been arrested or detained and that hundreds of thousands of shanty dwellers had been evicted.¹⁶ A useful survey in July 2005 of over 14,000 households in 26 high-density wards in Greater Harare concluded that over 70 percent had “lost shelter” or “lost their sources of income.”¹⁷ But all such estimates were based on partial documentation or unrepresentative samples. A more systematic, nationwide approach was required.

The first comprehensive effort to estimate the scope of OM was the United Nations *Report of the Fact-Finding Mission to Zimbabwe* that we quoted above. The report, which was based on field visits to urban centers countrywide, divided OM victims into two groups: those *directly* affected and those *indirectly* affected. UN special envoy Anna Tibaijuka defined and calculated the number of directly affected persons as the “700,000 people in cities across the country (who) have either lost their homes or livelihoods or both.”¹⁸ She then applied “a reasonable multiplier effect (to) bring the number of indirectly affected people to over 2.1 million.” Together, and allowing for overlap between categories, “the (UN) mission estimates that the total population directly and indirectly affected...is about 2.4 million.”¹⁹

The Government of Zimbabwe rejected this estimate. Minister of Defense Sydney Sekeramayi accused Ms. Tibaijuka of “whipping up the international community’s emotions and sending a wrong message about Zimbabwe.”²⁰ Minister of Foreign Affairs Simbarashe Mumbengegwi stated that the UN report was biased and, moreover, exaggerated the number of victims: “throughout the report, submissions by the government are consistently referred to as ‘allegations’ while those of the opposition...are taken as statements of fact.”²¹

So who is right? As its own contribution to the debate about the scope of the crackdown, the Afrobarometer survey asked: “Were you, or a member of your immediate family, affected by Operation Murambatsvina in any of the following ways?” The relevant effects included: destruction of a home or dwelling; eviction from place of residence; destruction or closure of a business; arrest for engaging in illegal trade; or loss of a job. The responses (“yes,” “no,” or “don’t know”) generated two indicators. The first was a simple binary measure of whether families were *OM victims* (“yes” to *any* effect). The other was an additive index that probed the *extent of OM victimization* (the number of “yes” responses given by each respondent on a scale from zero to five).

By either measure, Operation Murambatsvina had a wide impact on people’s lives. Table 1 shows that more than half (54 percent) of the main sample of adult Zimbabweans reported being affected in one way or another.²² As expected, every respondent (100 percent) in the sub-sample of displaced persons also said they, or a family member, had been victimized. Moreover, displaced persons were more than twice as likely as average Zimbabweans to have suffered a complete array of five negative effects ranging from the destruction of a dwelling to the loss of a job. Indeed, by this measure, almost one-third (31 percent) of displaced persons had been rendered completely destitute.

Table 1: Incidence and Extent of OM Victimization

| | Adult Zimbabweans | Displaced Persons |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| OM Victim | | |
| Yes, affected in some way | 54 | 100 |
| No, not affected | 46 | 0 |
| Don't know | <1 | 0 |
| Extent of OM Victimization | | |
| 1 Effect | 13 | 23 |
| 2 Effects | 12 | 20 |
| 3 Effects | 9 | 9 |
| 4 Effects | 7 | 16 |
| 5 Effects | 14 | 31 |

It is important to note that the Afrobarometer survey measured the impact of OM on family units, not just individuals. By asking about “you or a member of your immediate family,” we sought to capture the reality that individual welfare in Zimbabwe is a function of collective circumstances. If one member of a family unit – defined flexibly in terms of the respondent’s own subjective definition – loses a home or job, then other members of the unit will be negatively (and indirectly) affected. So our data refers to both *direct and indirect* effects of Operation Murambatsvina. With this proviso, and because the Afrobarometer defines OM victimization in equivalent fashion to the United Nations (“loss of home or livelihood or both”), we think that our results can be compared with those of the Tibaijuka report.

As stated, the survey estimates that 54 percent of the adult population of Zimbabwe was affected by OM. The official census reports a total population of Zimbabwe at 11.635 million in 2002.²³ An annual population growth rate of 1.1 percent produces a 2005 population of 12.023 million. Let us conservatively estimate that 2.023 million Zimbabweans have emigrated in search of political freedoms and economic opportunities.²⁴ Of the roughly 10 million people who remain behind, approximately 50 percent are under the age of eighteen.²⁵ Subtracting people under the voting age, we are left with an eligible population of about 5 million adults. If 54 percent of these were affected, then the estimate of total OM victims (direct and indirect) must be raised to 2.7 million.

This figure is slightly higher than that offered by the United Nations. There are two possibilities: either the Afrobarometer has overestimated the scope of OM effects²⁶ or the United Nations has underestimated the effects. Whatever the case, and unless all careful studies are wrong (which seems unlikely), the Government of Zimbabwe appears to be incorrect in claiming that Anna Tibaijuka exaggerated the impact of Operation Murambatsvina.

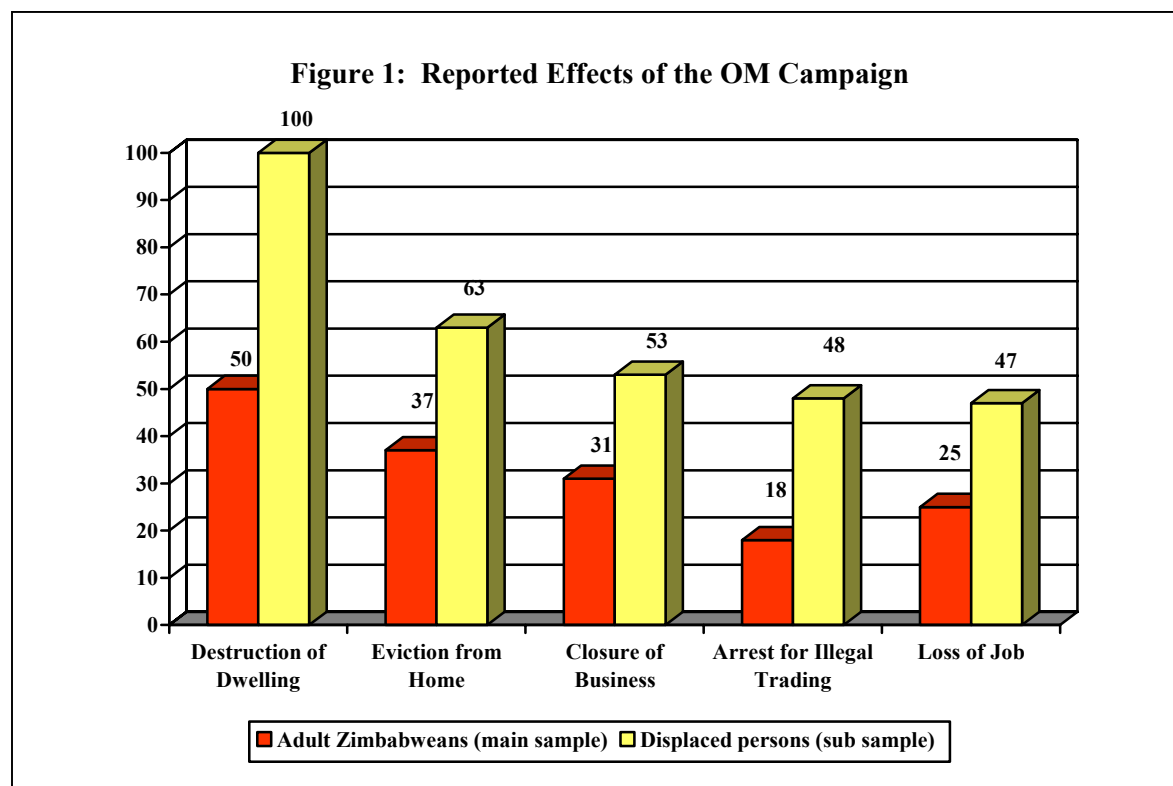
What Kinds of Impact?

Beyond confirming the wide aggregate scope of the crackdown, survey data allows us to explore exactly who was affected and how.

Figure 1 addresses the latter question. It shows that OM victims were most likely to experience the destruction of a dwelling. A catastrophe of this sort reportedly struck all displaced persons and exactly half of all adult Zimbabweans or their families. In some cases, especially in squatter settlements, a primary residence was demolished and the family found themselves homeless. More often, demolition was targeted at outbuildings (like workers’ quarters) or extensions (that often failed to meet city building codes) that were leased out to renters as a means of supplementing household income.

As a result, not all demolitions resulted in eviction. While about two-thirds of displaced persons reported being forcibly ejected from their homes, about one-third of other Zimbabweans said this had happened to them or their family members. The police and local government authorities executed evictions in

summary fashion, either without notice or with only the briefest of forewarnings, and always in violation of the law. The government never paid compensation for abandoned or destroyed property and only rarely provided evictees – usually its own supporters – with decent alternative housing. Instead, the cash-strapped government undertook to launch a crash program to build new homes, a promise that it manifestly lacked the capacity to fulfill.²⁷

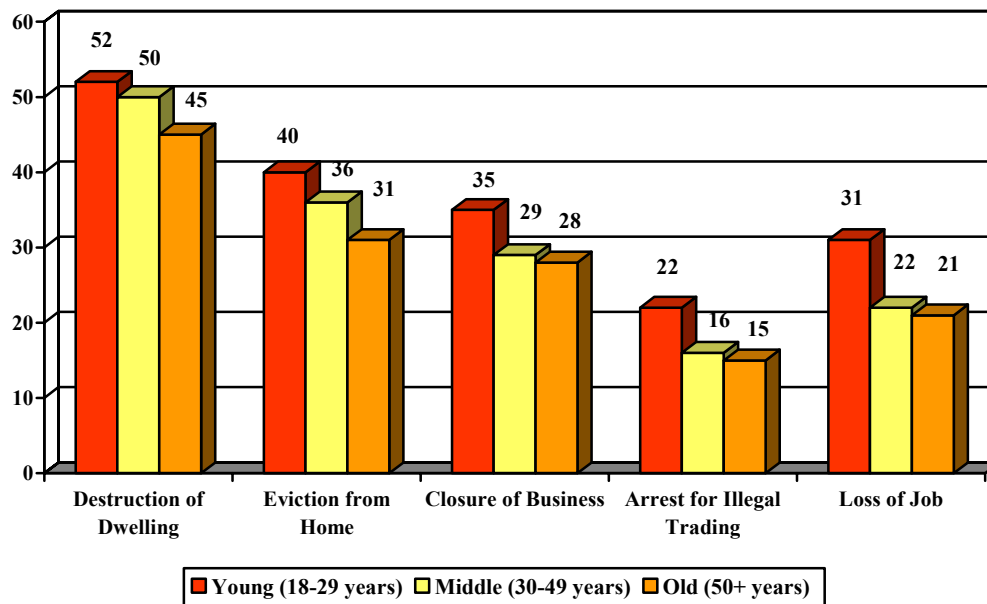


Other Zimbabweans had their business premises destroyed, including roadside kiosks, home tuck shops, or stands at informal flea markets. The closure or razing of informal enterprises affected nearly a third of all families and more than half of all displaced persons. These numbers swell when those arrested for engaging in “illegal” trade are also counted. Almost two in every ten among average Zimbabweans said that they (or someone from their immediate circle of relatives) were apprehended and required to pay “admission of guilt” fines to regain their freedom. Moreover, one quarter of all respondents reported that they (or some close family member) lost a job consequent upon OM, a figure that doubled for displaced persons. In other words, as well as losing their homes, half of the most severely affected Zimbabweans also lost their livelihoods.

Who are the OM Victims?

Operation Murambatsvina struck men and women with equal impact. There was a slight tendency for men to be victimized more often than women, but this difference was not statistically significant. But being a head of household, whether male or female, offered some measure of protection.

Figure 2: OM Effects, by Age

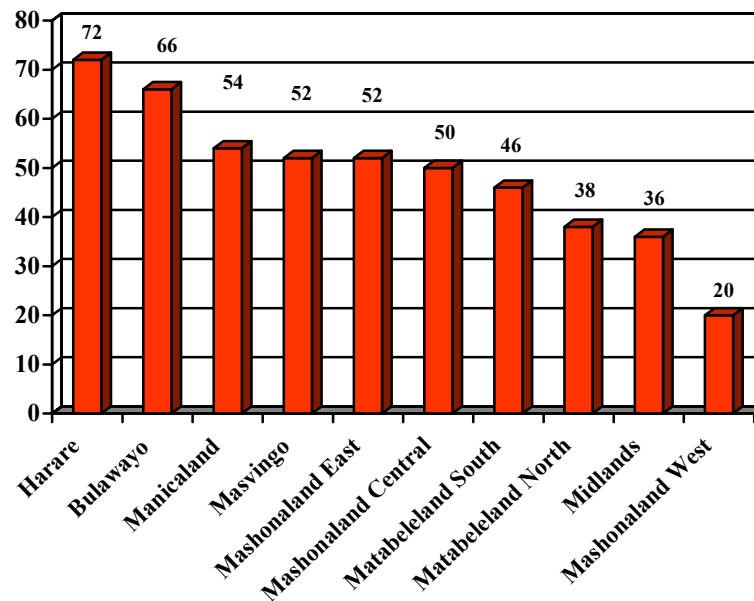


Instead, the crackdown was concentrated among younger, less established people and their families. Overall, some 58 percent of youngsters (aged 18-29 years) were victimized compared to 54 percent of middle-aged folks (30-49 years). Somewhat fewer (50 percent) older people (50 years or more) were affected, in part because many lived in rural areas far from the epicenter. As Figure 2 shows, the age effect was consistent for all kinds of OM consequences. Young people were more likely than old people to suffer a loss of property (dwelling or home) and especially likely to lose a livelihood (by being arrested for trading or losing a job).

OM also targeted entrepreneurial elements. There was no difference in OM impact between those who were employed, either part time or full time, and those who were unemployed. But persons actively looking for a job (or a better job than one presently held) were inordinately likely to get caught in the OM web (63 percent versus 48 percent). In other words, the principal victims of OM were younger people who were yet to become head of their own households but who were active jobseekers. Included in these numbers were the “lumpen” elements of no fixed abode or employment and who were available for easy mobilization in any anti-state uprising.

What was the geographic impact of the crackdown? Figure 3 shows the provincial breakdown of those who had their homes or dwellings destroyed. It confirms that OM was a largely urban phenomenon with most reported housing demolition occurring in Harare (72 percent) and Bulawayo (66 percent). Harare also experienced the largest proportions that had a business closed (63 percent) or suffered eviction from their homes (56 percent) (not shown). Bulawayo (38 percent) and Matabeleland South (33 percent) led the way in arrests for engaging in illegal trade. Mashonaland West, the rural homeland of President Robert Mugabe and a ruling party stronghold, escaped with the least reported impact.

Figure 3: Reported Destruction of Dwelling, by Province



Were Opposition Supporters Targeted?

Operation Murambatsvina followed close on the heels of Zimbabwe's parliamentary elections of March 2005. Because this election confirmed that political opposition was centered in urban areas, there is reason to suppose that the crackdown constituted a form of collective punishment. As documented earlier, many Zimbabweans think that the government intended to reprimand opposition supporters for voting the "wrong" way, that is, for casting their ballots for MDC parliamentary candidates.

But the survey data indicate that people who voted in the 2005 parliamentary elections were not the primary targets of the state's repression. Overall, there was slight tendency for abstainers, rather than voters, to later become OM victims (78 versus 72 percent).²⁸ But the pattern varies across urban and rural areas. Abstainers were more likely to be targeted for *not* voting in the countryside, where party officials and youth militias had applied strong-arm pressures for villagers to vote for ZANU-PF. By contrast, voters were more likely to be victimized in towns, here presumably for voting *against* the government (67 versus 62 percent). As such, there is trace – though hardly overwhelming – evidence that OM was partly a device to rebuke urban voters for preferring opposition candidates. In both areas, the crackdown also affected people who had not registered to vote and who chose not to vote, perhaps because they thought the electoral playing field was uneven.

While, except in urban areas, voters were not always singled out for victimization, the government did seem to aim the cleanup at people who favored less conventional forms of political participation. For example, those who reported that they had joined a "stay away" during the previous year – that is, refused to go to work as a protest against government policies – were more than twice as likely to subsequently become OM victims (12 versus 5 percent). By "staying away," citizens signaled that they dissented from the government. Perhaps, where feasible, the authorities therefore concentrated on visible activist elements and those who had openly joined protests in the past.

Voting records also identify opposition sympathizers. Although the Afrobarometer did not ask respondents how they voted in the March parliamentary election, MPOI had done so in a previous survey

in July-August, 2005. Just under one third (31 percent) had reported voting for ZANU-PF candidates while 23 percent said they had voted MDC.²⁹ Most of the remainder declined to answer. Among self-ascribed partisans, more than two thirds (71 percent) of MDC supporters subsequently became OM victims while less than half (45 percent) of ZANU-PF supporters suffered the same fate. With this evidence of the partisan affiliations of respondents *before* the advent of OM, we can infer that MDC supporters were indeed somewhat likely to be targeted for repression.

All told, however, we find that the OM dragnet was cast so wide that it caught supporters of the ruling party as well as its opponents. While opposition individuals or blocs may have been singled out, an equally plausible story allows that the security apparatus cracked down on *any* young unemployed – or underemployed, or informally employed – person who was a potential recruit for anti-state protest.

The (Limited) Movement of OM Victims

How have OM victims fared? Survey respondents were asked about their movements in the wake of the OM onslaught.

For instance, where did the homeless find sanctuary? Only small proportions (16 percent overall and just 14 percent of displaced persons) were ever transported to a transit camp set up by churches or the government. Instead, many more people who lost their homes (42 percent overall and 58 percent of displaced persons) stayed in the open, often by the roadside, at least for the period immediately after they were evicted. Most of these OM victims were left entirely to their own devices and did not receive relief from any governmental or non-governmental agency. In the absence of organized forms of relief, people fell back on the informal ties of kinship. Three out of four OM victims (76 percent) and nine out of ten displaced persons (89 percent) reported moving in with relatives.

One of the apparent objectives of OM was to disperse selected urban populations – whether informal traders or supporters of the MDC – to rural areas, where ZANU-PF could more easily oversee their activities. In the short run, the authorities seemed to meet this goal: some 68 percent of OM victims (53 percent of displaced people) reported relocating to a rural area (see Table 2). But we have reason to believe that any such movements were temporary.

Table 2: Post-OM Population Movements

| | Adult Zimbabweans | | Displaced Persons |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|
| | All | OM Victims | |
| Taken into transit camp | 8 | 16 | 14 |
| Stayed in the open | 20 | 42 | 58 |
| Moved in with relatives | 40 | 76 | 89 |
| Relocated to a rural area | 35 | 68 | 53 |

Rather, in the medium to long run, the government failed to induce a mass movement of people from urban to rural areas. To track population movements, the survey explicitly asked, “how recently did you come to stay in this area?” We were especially keen to identify displaced persons who, in October 2005, said “within the last six months,” a period within the time frame of the cleanup campaign. The first thing to notice is that just one in twenty adults (5 percent) acknowledged having arrived in their present residential location within this interval. On the face of it, this figure does not seem to represent an inordinately large aggregate population shift, especially over and above movements during more normal periods. For example, in the six months *prior* to OM, almost as many people (4 percent) reported changing their area of residence.

Second, at the time of the survey interview in October 2005, there was significantly more recent residential turnover recorded by those living in urban areas (7 percent) than among those living in rural areas (4 percent). In other words, if population displacement occurred, it did so more *within* urban areas than *from* urban *to* rural areas. This pattern is confirmed by answers to the question: “where were you living before you came to stay here?” Of those who moved in the last six months, more people replied that they moved from one urban area to another (39 percent) than from an urban to a rural area (23 percent).³⁰ In fact, just as many people also moved *within* rural areas (from one communal or resettlement area to another) as moved from urban to rural areas. In short, we find no evidence of a distinctive mass wave of urban-rural out-migration in Zimbabwe during 2005.

We do not mean to imply that Operation Murambatsvina did not cause population movements. It clearly did. Among those who moved within the six-month period from May to October 2005, for example, two-thirds reported being OM victims. But we want to qualify the nature of the connection between victimization and displacement. Many fewer people changed residential areas than might have been expected, which suggests that those who were evicted found alternative shelter close to home. Indeed, almost twice as many survey respondents reported moving in with relatives in *urban* areas than in rural areas.³¹ In other words, evictees and displaced persons in Zimbabwe’s cities and towns generally put down new roots elsewhere in towns, leading to even greater overcrowding within the existing urban housing stock.

Moreover, it is not unreasonable to expect that many of those forcibly removed to so-called “home” areas in the rural hinterland would sooner or later drift back into towns. In our survey, two-fifths of those who reported being relocated to rural “homelands” were actually interviewed in an *urban* area, which suggests that had not stayed long in the countryside.³² As such, the government apparently did not generally succeed in its goal to rusticate urbanites.

The Resilient Informal Economy

Another stated goal of the cleanup campaign was to put an end to unapproved trading, especially where exchanges of foreign currency were involved. Over the previous decade in Zimbabwe, the informal sector expanded greatly, first as a planned response to structural adjustment reforms and later as a spontaneous substitute for a shrinking formal economy. By the time of the survey, over one third of all Zimbabwean adults (36 percent) and nearly half of urban dwellers (47 percent) acknowledged having engaged during the previous year in “buying and selling goods.” These trading activities were a vital means for the unemployed to generate income and a valuable sideline for professionals and employees faced with the declining purchasing power of wages and salaries. Indeed, by 2005, people with jobs were almost equally liable as the jobless to enter into informal trade.³³

One would expect unofficial entrepreneurs to be especially vulnerable to expropriation in the government’s sweep of the informal sector. This is the outcome that came to pass. Whereas just over one quarter of non-traders (27 percent) were affected by OM, a proportion approaching half of the informal traders we interviewed (44 percent) were caught up in the onslaught. These individuals either lost a dwelling or a business or were arrested for illegal trading; and some individuals (54 percent of those affected) suffered a combination of three such consequences.

Did the Government of Zimbabwe succeed in stamping out the informal sector? Our evidence suggests not. The hallmarks of the informal economy in Africa are adaptability and resilience. Despite the attempted destruction of livelihoods, the self-reliant occupants of this sector in Zimbabwe quickly tried to recover. Among OM victims, fully four in ten continued to operate a business from their homes in

October 2005,³⁴ a figure that constitutes some 56 percent of those whose business were destroyed or closed.

We also asked survey respondents to record changes in their level of involvement in informal trading activities across time, that is, between the period before OM (“six months ago”) and the present time (“now”). Among those who experienced direct impact from OM, some two out of three (68 percent) said that they nevertheless presently continued to “buy and sell goods” on informal markets. Remarkably, one out of ten OM victims (10 percent) reported *starting* to engage in informal trade in *aftermath* of OM, even when they had never done so before. The architects of the OM campaign clearly underestimated the difficulties involved in breaking the backbone of the popular economy.

In fact, the overt impact of OM on the informal economy seems to have been restricted to the small minority who ceased trading activities. In October 2005, just 22 percent said that they no longer operated informal enterprises established before May 2005.

Of course, even if the majority did jump back in to informal trade, they often had to do so in clandestine fashion or by dodging the law. Small business operators also had to contend with damaged assets, reduced stocks, and a more anemic informal sector than before. But it is important to note that the proportions that continued to trade were almost identical among OM victims and those *unaffected* (68 versus 66 percent). This constitutes striking evidence of the limited impact of OM at curtailing to the “black market” activities that it was specifically designed to stop.

The (De)Legitimization of State Institutions

The government may have expected that OM would help to consolidate state power. But we find that it generally had the opposite effect: state legitimacy was undermined. From the perspective of public opinion, state institutions appeared less trustworthy after the crackdown than before it. To illustrate, the proportion of the adult population who expressed trust in a core array of state institutions – the parliament, the electoral commission, the courts of law, and the army – fell by 6 percentage points between April 2004 and October 2005 (from an average 48 percent to an average 42 percent).³⁵

The officers of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) were the campaign’s principal agents.³⁶ They took the lead in ordering people to destroy dwellings, close businesses, and board trucks to relocation camps. As such, the police represented the sharp end of the stick of state repression. Once held in fairly high esteem, the ZRP stood to lose popular respect as the state institution most closely associated with the OM crackdown.

Indeed, in recent times, public trust has slumped further for the police than for any other state institution. In April 2004, a majority of adult Zimbabweans (52 percent) actually said that they trusted the police “somewhat” or “a lot”; by October 2005, this proportion had dropped by a precipitous 13 points (to 39 percent). But can this decline be attributed to the cleanup operation that began in May 2005? We think so. The latest Afrobarometer survey shows that trust in the ZRP held reasonably steady among those who were *unaffected* by OM, declining just 2 points (to 50 percent).³⁷ By contrast, trust in the police fell by 23 points (to just 29 percent) among those who reported victimization. We take this as a clear indication that the police’s sagging reputation was directly attributable to their role as agents of OM.

As further evidence, we note a very strong relationship between OM impact and the proportion of people who think that it is “difficult” or “very difficult” to “get help from the police.”³⁸ Among those unaffected by OM, only four in ten (40 percent) hold this view, thus reinforcing the impression that many Zimbabweans continue to regard the police as an accessible source of help. By contrast, among OM

victims, more than seven in ten (73 percent) regard the police as unhelpful, most probably because they have recent direct experience of rough treatment at the hands of the ZRP.

While the legitimacy of the state is declining in Zimbabwe, and Operation Murambatsvina accelerated this trend, ordinary people still prefer a rule of law. When asked what they would do if wrongfully arrested – including for “illegal” trading – three quarters of adult Zimbabweans (75 percent) said they would “lodge a complaint through proper channels.” To be sure, OM victims are significantly less likely to say so,³⁹ but seven out of ten still claim they would use an approved, legal form of redress.

Where OM victims depart markedly from other Zimbabweans, however, is with regard to police corruption. Almost three times as many victims as non-victims (14 versus 5 percent) would seek release from wrongful arrest by “offer(ing) a tip or a bribe,” presumably to a police officer. As one 39-year old mother of three said: “I try to supplement the family budget by selling foodstuffs on the black market. However, my earnings are not much as we are continuously raided by the police who take our stuff if we don’t bribe them.”⁴⁰

Perhaps it is unsurprising that operators in the informal economy are ready to resort to bribery. Ordinary Zimbabweans seem to know that the police themselves are thoroughly implicated in the “black” markets that OM was expressly designed to eliminate. Indeed, Operation Murambatsvina seems to have had the effect of *increasing* graft within the police force. By October 2005, 62 percent of adult Zimbabweans thought that “some” or “all” of the ZRP were “involved in corruption,” a figure that was up sharply from 42 percent in 2004. By bringing police officers into close contact with the populace in an intensive campaign to seize or destroy property, the government created new opportunities for extortion and payoffs. This may have been an unintended effect. Alternatively, it could also be a purposive strategy of a bankrupt government that increasingly finds difficulty in covering the salaries of police and army officials.

The Political Fallout

Perhaps political leaders also somehow imagined that OM would boost ZANU-PF’s popularity, or at least its dominance. The outcome of the 2005 parliamentary elections sent an unmistakable signal that the party needed to rebuild its political base, especially in urban areas. Certain overzealous leaders – notably Ignatius Chombo, Minister of Local Government and Housing – may have exceeded their authority and allowed repression to get out of control. But we must again conclude that OM had negative, and probably unintended effects. Among the major political consequences of the onslaught were substantial drop-offs in popular approval for the ruling party. There was also a concomitant increase in the popularity of the opposition MDC between Afrobarometer surveys in April 2004 and October 2005.

Let us start with trust in the ruling party. Whereas fewer than half of adult Zimbabweans trusted ZANU-PF in April 2004, fewer than a third did so just eighteen months later (44 versus 31 percent). The key intervening events between these two measurements were, of course, the disputed parliamentary election and Operation Murambatsvina, which suggests a causal narrative. This inference is strengthened by the observation that, among the minority who still trusted the ruling party in October, OM victims were only half as likely to do so as those who remained unaffected (22 percent versus 44 percent). In short, the crackdown undercut the ruling party’s already dwindling base of support.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from data on the party affiliations and voting intentions of Zimbabwe’s electorate. Since these indicators are closely correlated,⁴¹ we will report only the latter here. Voting intentions are measured by a question that asks: “If a presidential election were held tomorrow, which party’s candidate would you vote for?” In October 2005, just 21 percent said they would vote for the ZANU-PF candidate in a context where some 39 percent refused to answer, or otherwise evaded, the

question. Consistent with the results just reported on trust, OM victims were only half as likely as other Zimbabweans, to say they would cast their ballot for the ruling party (15 percent versus 28 percent). Again, OM apparently reduced rather than boosted the size of ZANU-PF's electoral constituency.

The MDC benefited from trends of declining ZANU-PF support. In the first instance, the turn of political events – including the shock tactics of OM – brought many Zimbabweans “off the fence.” Whereas in April 2004 only 40 percent of adult Zimbabweans were willing to openly identify with *any* political party, some 54 percent were willing to risk doing so by October 2005. Apparently emboldened, the proportion that admitted to “feeling close” to MDC rose from 5 percent in 1999, to 10 percent in 2004, and to 34 percent in 2005. Although support for the main opposition party had been cautiously rising, OM apparently contributed to an acceleration of the upward trend (by 24 percentage points in just 18 months). Gains for MDC were especially marked among OM victims, who were three times more likely to identify with the opposition rather than the ruling party (40 percent versus 14 percent). Accordingly, by October 2005, OM victims were three times more likely to say they would vote for MDC than ZANU-PF (47 percent versus 15 percent).

We do not know whether MDC could have won a free and fair election held at that time; there were still too many voters who declined to reveal their voting intentions. And, although the polarization of political parties deepened,⁴² we do not know whether the apparent realignment of the electorate away from ZANU-PF is provisional or permanent. The swing towards the MDC among Zimbabwe's voters occurred before the opposition split apart over the issue of the party's participation in the November 2005 Senate elections. These events may have been just as profound as Operation Murambatsvina in shaping subsequent party preferences. As a result, the current (2006) distribution of support for the two main political parties is largely unknown. All that can be said with any certainty is that ZANU-PF would be unlikely to win without massive intimidation and fraud.

The Overall Impact of Repression

Zimbabwe is a country in crisis. The leadership of ZANU-PF has shown a reckless willingness to sacrifice the country's hard-won democracy and development at the altar of personal power. Operation Murambatsvina is only one manifestation of the extremes to which the incumbent leaders have gone in order to stifle independent economic and political activity. Other abuses include the uncompensated seizure of farmland, the misdirection of food aid for partisan purposes, and the torture of political detainees.⁴³ Our public opinion polls confirm that this self-destructive approach to governance has reaped alienation and despair among the population at large.⁴⁴

Because OM is a symptom of a broader pathology of rule, its impact should be weighed against other dimensions of Zimbabwe's current plight. Quite apart from OM, we suspect that support for the ruling party is undermined by public perceptions of economic mismanagement, official corruption, ethnic favoritism, and political intimidation. So, as a final step, we seek to situate OM in relation to other ongoing trends in public opinion. We construct a multivariate regression model that explains the expressed voting intentions of Zimbabweans in October 2005 as a function of a range of relevant considerations. Table 3 confirms that, with just five variables, it is possible to predict about half the variance in an individual's voting intention and to be correct 82 percent of the time.

Let us interpret each influence that shapes vote choice. The most important considerations are popular evaluations of the government's economic policy performance. If people feel positive about such performance – measured here on a four-item index of managing the economy, creating jobs, controlling inflation, and narrowing income gaps – they will probably choose a ZANU-PF candidate. Note, however, that over 90 percent of Zimbabweans thought that the government was doing *badly* on these economic issues in 2005! The second pressing consideration is popular perception of official corruption. If people

see corruption as a common affliction – measured here on an index covering ten types of public official – then they will likely vote *against* ZANU-PF candidates (as evidenced by the negative sign on the regression coefficient).

Also important to vote choice are two aspects of social structure: speakers of ChiShona, the majority language, tend to choose ZANU-PF, as do rural dwellers. Like other autocratic African rulers, especially those in political trouble, Mugabe has fallen back on core supporters among the kinsmen in the rural Shona heartland. So far, the ruling party has been able to rely on this secure base of political support even in the face of the public's negative assessments of economic performance and high levels of perceived corruption.

But does state repression remain an important factor determining party preferences even after these standard explanations are taken into account? The answer is affirmative. As indicated in the last line of Table 3, OM victimization continues to significantly depress support for the ruling party, even when controlled for powerful alternative influences. As such, we are on safe ground in concluding that Operation Murambatsvina backfired on the ruling party by further undermining its already declining political base.

Table 3: Logistic Regression Model of Probability of Voting for the Ruling Party

| | B | S.E. | Sig. | Explanatory Rank (OLS) |
|---|--------|------|------|------------------------|
| Constant | 4.134 | .832 | .000 | |
| Evaluation of Economic Policy Performance | 2.499 | .328 | .000 | 1 |
| Perception of Official Corruption | -1.394 | .260 | .000 | 2 |
| Chishona Speaker | 1.263 | .330 | .000 | 3 |
| Rural Dweller | .792 | .298 | .008 | 4 |
| Victim of Operation Murambatsvina | -.807 | .259 | .002 | 5 |

Correct predictions = 82 percent, Nagelkerke R square = .483

Conclusion

Given the wide social and political impact of the recent campaign of state repression in Zimbabwe, the International Crisis Group proposes that Operation Murambatsvina may be a “tipping point.”⁴⁵ If not already plain to see, the crackdown of May 2005 further laid bare the coercive essence of ZANU-PF rule. Well-informed outside observers therefore seemed to expect that the scope and severity of the humanitarian disaster would mobilize domestic and international forces behind a concerted effort for political change in Zimbabwe.

Yet, in the short run, Operation Murambatsvina appears to have met the government's ostensible primary objective of preempting an anti-state uprising. At the time of writing one year after the event, ZANU-PF was still firmly entrenched in power and the public mood in urban areas was brooding and sullen, but largely quiet. The unintended and counter-productive effects of state repression, which we have tried to document in this article, will only come home to roost – if at all – over a longer time horizon.

Certainly, the people of Zimbabwe condemn their government's actions. The OM campaign has few domestic defenders. Only two out of ten of adults interviewed say they agree with the official view that “the government's recent cleanup campaign was a *good thing* that helped rid our society of criminals and illegal activities” (21 percent). And this sentiment is common only among those who “feel close to ZANU-PF” (47 percent). By contrast, almost seven out of ten Zimbabweans consider that “the government's cleanup campaign was a *bad thing* that caused unnecessary hardship and violated people's human rights” (69 percent). This figure rises to 88 percent for those who “feel close to MDC,” to 84

percent for those who were internally displaced, and even to a clear majority (63 percent) among rural dwellers.

The purpose of this article has been to reveal and analyze such popular reactions. We have confirmed the wide scope of the OM crackdown and shown that its main victims were younger, unemployed urbanites whom state security agents saw as potential recruits for social unrest. Their families, including vulnerable elders and children, were swept up in the dragnet. While OM undoubtedly disrupted the informal economy, we have presented evidence that it did not succeed in banishing urban dwellers to rural areas or shutting down informal trade. Moreover, the crackdown had the unintended effect of discrediting the police and other state institutions. Finally, while we cannot verify that MDC supporters were the only targets of Operation Murambatsvina, we have demonstrated that the crackdown's main political *consequences* were to embolden the victims of repression, to deepen the polarization between political parties, and to fortify the ranks of Zimbabwe's opposition movement.

Despite this accumulated evidence, we are nonetheless hard pressed to see Operation Murambatsvina as a tipping point. While the opposition received a boost in popularity from the crackdown, the MDC split apart over electoral strategy almost immediately thereafter. Apart from the African Union's Commission of Human and People's Rights,⁴⁶ African leaders in neighboring countries – notably South Africa – generally turned a blind eye. And, the United Nations' blunt criticisms of the crackdown, and even its generous provision of food relief, have had little discernible impact on weakening the incumbent government. If Operation Murambatsvina was destined to “tip” ZANU-PF out of power, then such a change would probably have happened by now. Sadly for the long-suffering people of Zimbabwe, the situation in their country therefore seems destined to get worse before it gets better.

Endnotes

¹ For an insightful collection of current analyses by Zimbabwean scholars see David Harold-Berry (ed.), *Zimbabwe: The Past is the Future* (Harare, Weaver Press, 2004).

² “Zimbabwe Police Target Minibuses”, *BBC News*, May 24, 2005.

³ A senior state intelligence officer, part of the team coordinating the operation, was quoted as saying that “the operation is meant to reduce the number of people in the central business district so that, if violence erupts, it would be easy to contain.” *Zim Online* (South Africa) www.zimonline.co.za, May 24, 2005. Journalist Baffour Ankomah, usually sympathetic to Mugabe, also reported that “the operation was the brainchild of Zimbabwe’s intelligence community” designed to forestall “a Ukrainian-style revolution” *New African* (London), October 2005, reprinted in *The Herald* (Harare), October 4-5, 2005.

⁴ Government of Zimbabwe, “Response of the Government of Zimbabwe to the Report by the UN Special Envoy on Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order” (Harare, 2005).

⁵ “Rallying Cry Belies Mugabe’s Fear of Voter Revolt,” *The Times* (UK), March 31, 2005

⁶ Compared to the 2000 parliamentary election, ZANU-PF’s share of elected seats rose from 62 to 78 and the MDC’s share fell from 57 to 41. With the support of an additional 30 appointed MPs in the 150-seat House, ZANU-PF therefore enjoyed a two-thirds majority, enough to change the Constitution.

⁷ Zimbabwe Election Support Network, “Statement on the 2005 Parliamentary Elections,” Harare, April 3, 2005. See also Carole Andrews and Bryn Morgan, “Zimbabwe After the 2005 Parliamentary Elections,” *Research Paper No. 05/58* (London, UK House of Commons Library, August 2005).

⁸ “Police in Zimbabwe Arrest 9000 Traders” *Guardian* (UK), May 24, 2005.

⁹ “Zimbabwe Government Continues Blitz,” *Associated Press*, June 5, 2005.

¹⁰ “U.N. Condemns Zimbabwe for Bulldozing Urban Slums,” *New York Times*, July 23, 2005.

¹¹ United Nations, *Report of the Fact-Finding Mission to Zimbabwe to Assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina by the UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe, Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka* (New York, United Nations, July 18, 2005), p.7.

¹² “UN Chief Annan’s Statement on Zimbabwe Demolitions” *Reuters*, July 22, 2005.

¹³ “Zimbabwe Steams Ahead with Demolitions,” *Mail and Guardian* (SA), July 26, 2005.

¹⁴ See “UN Envoy Says Zimbabwe’s Crisis is Deepening,” *Business Day* (SA), December 7, 2005 and “New Threat of Urban Demolition,” *IRIN - Integrated Regional Information Networks* (UN), April 7, 2006.

¹⁵ For information on country coverage and research methods, see www.afrobarometer.org.

¹⁶ “Zimbabwe Takes Harsh Steps in Major Cities to Counter Unrest,” *New York Times*, June 2, 2005.

¹⁷ Action Aid International/Combined Harare Residents Association, *A Study on the Impact of “Operation/Murambatsvina/Restore Order” in 26 Wards of Harare High Density Housing Areas* (Harare, AA/CHRA, July 2005).

¹⁸ *Report of the Fact-Finding Mission* (2005), p. 8.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 34.

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- ²⁰ “Annan May Take Up Mugabe Invite,” *The Scotsman* (UK), July 26, 2005.
- ²¹ “Mugabe Hoping to Sidestep Mbeki and Annan,” *Sunday Independent* (SA), July 24, 2005. Zimbabwe’s Ambassador to the UN also branded the report “exaggerated,” *BBC News*, July 27, 2005.
- ²² This result almost exactly replicates the finding of an earlier survey conducted by the Mass Public Opinion Institute. Based on a national probability sample of 1041 interviews and using the same question, MPOI found in July-August 2005 that 55 percent of respondents reported that they or their immediate families were affected. See Eldred Masunungure and Anyway Ndadadzwa, *Zimbabwe Elections, 2005: Post-Parliamentary Survey Report* (Harare, MPOI, August 2005).
- ²³ Central Statistical Office, *Census 2002, Zimbabwe: Preliminary Report* (Harare, CSO, December 2002), p.1.
- ²⁴ See Dan Tevera and Jonathan Crush, “The New Brain Drain from Zimbabwe: Investigating the Causes Behind Skilled Migration from Zimbabwe,” (2003) www.queensu.ca/samp/migrationresources.
- ²⁵ The World Bank’s *African Development Indicators* says 43 percent are under age 14 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2004), p.309.
- ²⁶ Survey respondents may have used an especially broad subjective definition when defining an OM victim as a member of their “immediate family.”
- ²⁷ “Msika Officially Launches Operation Garikai,” *The Herald* (Harare), June 30, 2005. Also “Zimbabwe: Operation Live Well Struggles to Take Off,” *IRIN - Integrated Regional Information Networks* (UN), August 19, 2005.
- ²⁸ In Zimbabwe, as in other African countries, young and unemployed people are least likely to vote.
- ²⁹ MPOI, *Zimbabwe Elections, 2005*, p.iii.
- ³⁰ Note: the percentage figures should be treated with caution since the number of cases is small (n=56).
- ³¹ 60 percent were urban versus 34 percent rural.
- ³² 38 percent were interviewed in urban areas versus 62 percent in rural areas.
- ³³ 35 percent among the former versus 37 percent among the latter.
- ³⁴ 41 percent among the random sample of adults, 45 percent among displaced persons.
- ³⁵ For 2004 estimates of institutional trust see Michael Bratton, Annie Chikwana and Tulani Sithole, “Propaganda and Public Opinion in Zimbabwe,” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 23, 1, 2005: 77-108.
- ³⁶ According to an official report, “Police had been approached by local authorities to help in enforcing Council by-laws, which were being ignored...(and) to relocate street kids, vagrants, touts and vendors who were causing chaos in town.” Zimbabwe Republic Police, “Zimbabwe Republic Police Response to Allegations of Deaths Suffered during Operation Murambatsvina/Restore Order,” (Harare, August 2005).
- ³⁷ This slight adjustment lies within the margin of sampling error for a single survey
- ³⁸ Pearson’s $r = .271$, $p < .001$.
- ³⁹ By 9 percentage points: 71 percent for OM victims versus 80 percent for non-victims.

⁴⁰ “Price of Basics Soars Beyond reach of Poor Zimbabweans,” *Mail and Guardian* (South Africa), March 20, 2006.

⁴¹ Pearson’s $r = .962$, $p < .001$. Indeed, these indicators are so closely correlated that either could act as a proxy for the other and one can be dropped from future questionnaires, at least in Zimbabwe. We still need to check whether this conclusion is justified in less politically polarized settings too.

⁴² The proportion of MDC supporters who said they did not trust the ruling party “at all” rose from 49 percent in April 2004 to 62 percent in October 2005.

⁴³ See International Crisis Group, “Post-Election Zimbabwe: What Next?” *Africa Report No. 93*, June 7, 2005, www.crisisgroup.org.

⁴⁴ Masunungure, Eldred, Anyway Ndapwadza and Noma Sibanda, “Support for Democracy and Democratic Institutions in Zimbabwe,” *Afrobarometer Briefing Paper No. 27*, March 2006, www.afrobarometer.org.

⁴⁵ International Crisis Group, “Zimbabwe’s Operation Murambatsvina: The Tipping Point?” *Africa Report No. 97*, August 17, 2005, p.4. www.crisisgroup.org.

⁴⁶ “African leaders Break Silence Over Mugabe’s Human Rights Abuses,” *The Guardian* (UK), January 4, 2006.